



ACT!ON

July 2009

Events and Meetings:

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Centennial Convention, New York, NY
July 11–16

<http://www.naacp.org/events/convention/100th/index.htm>

2009 National Medical Association Annual Convention and Scientific Assembly, Las Vegas, NV
July 25–30

http://nmanet.org/index.php/ConvJspargo/convention_overview

2009 National Urban League Annual Conference, Chicago, IL
July 29–August 1

<http://nul.org/2009/annualconference.html>

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) National Convention, Memphis, TN
August 1–5

<http://www.sclcnational.org/core/item/page.aspx?s=2931>

National Black Nurses Association 2009 Annual Institute and Conference, Toronto, CAN
August 2–6

<http://www.nbna.org>

Leadership Corner

On June 8, we officially welcomed Thomas (Tom) Frieden, MD, MPH, as the new director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and on July 6, we welcomed Jonathan (Jono) Mermin, MD, MPH, as the new director of the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention (DHAP). In addition, DHAP is currently in the process of hiring its first Associate Director for Health Disparities. These recent changes in top leadership bring expectations of paving new paths for the agency and the division to strengthen our alliances with you, our Heightened National Response (HNR) partners. By continuing to improve our collaborative efforts and expand our communication channels, we can best use existing resources to prevent new cases of HIV/AIDS among African Americans and further reduce longstanding racial/ethnic disparities.

On June 27, DHAP and the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP) joined partners throughout the country to support National HIV Testing Day (NHTD). Started in 1995 by the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA), this annual observance is designed to strengthen our collective efforts to increase the number of persons in the United States who know their HIV infection status. Early HIV diagnosis is critical, so persons who are infected can fully benefit from available life-saving treatments. Currently, about 21% of HIV-infected persons do not know they are infected, and almost 40% of people with HIV are not diagnosed until they have already developed AIDS.

In collaboration with HNR partners and those of you who are also *Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative* (AAALI) partners, state and local health departments, community-based organizations, HIV testing sites, and AIDS service providers across the United States, we worked to reiterate the focus on HIV testing as an opportunity to educate and mobilize communities. Health fairs, community education, special events, and extended testing hours were some of the strategies used to increase awareness of the importance of being tested for HIV—and to get people to *take the test* and *take control* of their lives.

We must always keep in mind how critical each individual and each organization is in the fight against HIV and AIDS. As we strive together to engage new partners and chart new courses to reach those at increased risk for HIV, we hope this issue of the *ACT!ON* newsletter provides additional information and opportunities for furthering our collective action to reduce the burden of HIV and AIDS in African American and other communities throughout the country.

National HIV Testing Day Links Partners to Expand Testing Efforts

DHAP and NCHHSTP joined partners throughout the country to support National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) on June 27. This year's activities also took advantage of innovative on-line and digital communication channels to encourage HIV testing. For example, users visiting the National HIV and STD Testing Resources Web site at www.hivtest.org can now link to the



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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Events and Meetings:

**Bronner Brothers
International Hair Show,
Atlanta, GA**
August 15–18
<http://www.bronnerbros.com/show/index.php>

**2009 National HIV
Prevention Conference,
Atlanta, GA**
August 23–26
<http://www.2009nhpc.org/>

**For Sisters Only,
Atlanta, GA**
September 19–20
<http://www.forsistersonly.org>

**Congressional Black
Caucus Foundation
Annual Legislative
Conference,
Washington, D.C.**
September 23–26
<http://www.cbccfinc.org/alc-09.html>

**National Minority
AIDS Council's U.S.
Conference on AIDS,
San Francisco, CA**
October 29–31
<http://www.nmac.org/index/2009-usca>

**NAPWA World AIDS
Day Leadership
Conference,
Columbus, OH**
November 16–17
<http://www.napwa.org/programs/regional-meetings.shtml>

www.nineandahalfminutes.org site—a part of the *Act Against AIDS* (AAA) communication and HIV prevention campaign (www.cdc.gov/hiv/aaa/)—to get information they need to protect themselves from HIV infection, live healthier lives if they are infected with HIV, and get more information about HIV testing. New features, such as Twitter messages, Web badges, and widgets, directed users to these same Web sites. Through campaigns and other outreach activities, CDC is continually engaging new partners and providing new avenues to reach those at increased risk for HIV.

Using their existing communication platforms to disseminate messages, all AAALI organizations participated in joint activities in support of NHTD and the AAA campaign. Here is a sample of these activities:

- The American Urban Radio Networks used their on-air talent to present a series of testimonials designed to broadcast pertinent messages on NHTD. In a taped interview that aired on NHTD, President Obama urged Americans to take the test and take control.
- The Atlanta chapter of the National Action Network organized a health fair that featured testing and other health screenings.
- The National Council of Negro Women coordinated with local health departments to conduct *Love Yourself, Protect Yourself Day: Celebrate Life* at its national headquarters. The event included music, outdoor activities, and HIV testing.
- The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) held NHTD health fairs at several chapter locations including those in Atlanta; Dayton, Ohio; Dallas; Pensacola, Florida; and West Jefferson, Alabama. To share prevention information with event attendees, SCLC partnered with local health agencies and CDC at its second annual *HIV Get Tested* event.

On June 11, as part of the AAA campaign, CDC launched—in Washington, D.C.—the first in a series of local media roundtables directed to black journalists in 10 U.S. cities. The roundtable discussion topics offered another opportunity to promote NHTD. For more information about the media roundtables, see article on page 6.

To commemorate NAPWA's 15th annual NHTD and draw attention to the AIDS epidemic in blacks, the Black AIDS Institute and NAPWA released on June 25 the first ever national report on the state of HIV testing in Black America. According to *Passing the Test: The Challenges and Opportunities of HIV Testing in Black America* (<http://blackaids.org/ShowArticle.aspx?pagename=ShowArticle&articletype=SITEFEATURE&articleid=680&pagenumber=1>), more than 100,000 blacks in the United States are living with HIV but are unaware of their infection. The report calls on every black person in America to find out their HIV status. CDC researchers estimate that up to 70% of new infections in blacks are transmitted by persons who are unaware of their HIV infection. Persons with undiagnosed HIV infection are 3½ times more likely to expose others to the virus than persons whose infection has been diagnosed.

Most importantly, all our collaborative NHTD activities remind us that HIV remains a major public health threat and that HIV testing is a critical step in reducing HIV infections. Read more about NHTD at www.hhs.gov/aidsawarenessdays/days/testing/.

Focus on HNR Partners Ernest Hopkins and Denise Rolark-Barnes

In addition to heading The Phoenix Group Foundation, a nonprofit corporation created to provide capacity building and technical assistance for grassroots organizations serving communities at risk, Ernest Hopkins is also a long-time supporter of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in the African American community.

After attending the 2008 HNR Partnership meeting, Hopkins committed to working with the National Black Gay Men's Advocacy Coalition to heighten HIV/AIDS awareness in the African American community and to support passage of the National HIV/AIDS Elimination Act.



Ernest Hopkins at the 2008 HNR Partnership Meeting in Atlanta.

Continuing his work, last February Hopkins was elected to the executive committee of the National Black Gay Men's Advocacy Coalition, where he currently works to heighten HIV/AIDS awareness among African American men who have sex with men (MSM). That same month, he was appointed to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Advisory Committee on HIV and STD Prevention and Treatment. As a committee member, he works to promote targeted prevention interventions for African American MSM and lends his expertise toward developing treatment objectives, strategies, policies, and priorities.

Established in 1964 by Dr. Calvin W. Rolark, the *Washington Informer* serves D.C.'s African American population. Forty-five years later, the paper, which has a circulation of 50,000, still has its finger planted on the pulse of the community, with Rolark's daughter and current publisher Denise Rolark-Barnes at the helm.

Committed to continuing her father's legacy, Rolark-Barnes uses her influence to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on the African American community. In 2008, after attending the HNR Partnership meeting, Rolark-Barnes committed to increasing HIV/AIDS awareness among African American adults, providing media training to local community-based organizations (CBOs), and increasing media coverage of public policy.

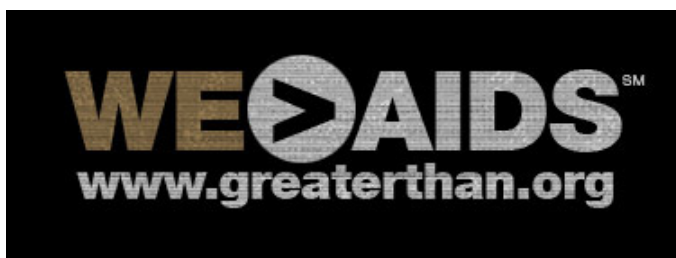
Since January, the newspaper has published several articles about local HIV policy. In June, Rolark-Barnes served as a panelist on the first *Act Against AIDS* Media Roundtable in Washington, D.C.

Rolark-Barnes remains committed to spreading awareness about the HIV/AIDS epidemic among blacks and is working to provide media training and marketing tips to local CBOs. "As a person in the media, particularly the black media, we have a responsibility to do everything within our power to inform our community about HIV/AIDS and the resources available within our communities," she said. "We have... to sensitize our community enough to remove stigma so that people will go out and get tested and treated."



Denise Rolark-Barnes, publisher of the *Washington Informer*, was a panelist on the first *Act Against AIDS* media roundtable in Washington, DC, June 11.

CDC Joins with Kaiser Family Foundation to Launch Black AIDS Media Partnership



On June 25, in association with the Kaiser Family Foundation, CDC launched the Black AIDS Media Partnership (BAMP) to kick off *Greater Than AIDS*, a coordinated campaign to reach black Americans with life-saving information about HIV/AIDS and to confront the stigma surrounding the disease. The *Greater Than AIDS* theme reminds African Americans that they are greater than any challenge they have ever faced—and that they too are greater than any disease and cannot allow themselves to be defined by AIDS.

Through the campaign, which is being developed as a part of *Act Against AIDS*, BAMP seeks to unite blacks in responding to the HIV/AIDS crisis that is so disproportionately affecting the community. *Greater Than AIDS* stresses six specific actions in response to the epidemic: being informed; using condoms; getting tested—and treated—as needed; speaking openly; acting with respect; and getting involved. The first wave of campaign content will include radio, outdoor, print, and online elements, with television content planned for release in the fall. *Test 1 Million*, a corresponding campaign produced by the Black AIDS Institute to test 1 million black Americans a year, also is being distributed as part of the *Greater Than AIDS* campaign. For more information about the campaign, visit www.greaterthan.org/.

Kaiser Family Foundation, a leader in health policy and communications, is providing strategic direction and day-to-day management for BAMP as well as overseeing campaign production and facilitating support of member commitments. CDC

and partnering AIDS service organizations are providing strategic counsel and localized support.

CDC Expands 9½ Minutes Web Site

On April 7, White House officials teamed up with the Department of Health and Human Services, CDC, and DHAP to launch the *Act Against AIDS* campaign. The Obama administration's support for this renewed focus on the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic reaffirms our hard work to prevent HIV infection and reassures the nation that more resources will be made available to fight the epidemic. In conjunction with the campaign, CDC and DHAP launched the www.nineandahalfminutes.org Web site. Among other features, the site provides basic HIV/AIDS facts, tips on protecting yourself and others from HIV, and tips and resources for those living with HIV/AIDS. Look soon for these enhancements to the site:

- Expanded site will highlight more stories from persons affected by HIV and AIDS, in both print and video formats. The enhanced *Share Your Story* feature will allow users to submit their own HIV stories through the Web site to share their personal experiences with HIV and AIDS.
- New HIV test search feature will allow persons to locate a testing site directly from any page of the 9½ Minutes site.
- New interactive HIV knowledge quiz—which will allow users to quiz themselves on their familiarity with HIV/AIDS information—and the rotating *HIV Facts* features will soon be available.

IFBP Members Get Preview of DHAP's HIV Testing Materials for Black MSM



Carla Cartwright, Alan Dowell, and Earl Fowlkes, Jr., founder of IFBP and member of the Consultant Work Group for the BMSM HIV testing campaign, at the February IFBP meeting.

At the annual meeting of the International Federation of Black Prides (IFBP), February 6–8, in Jacksonville, FL, Black Pride organizations heard about DHAP's new HIV testing social marketing effort directed to young black men who have sex with men (MSM)—a group that HIV/AIDS surveillance data show has more new HIV infections than any other age/racial group of MSM. Alan Dowell, health communications specialist in DHAP's Prevention Communication Branch (PCB), and Carla Cartwright of Porter Novelli presented materials for the HIV testing effort—a phase of the recently launched *Act Against AIDS* campaign—to member organizations. They also forged relationships with several member Black Prides and committed to attending other 2009 Black Pride celebrations in Chicago (early July), Detroit (late July), New York City (early August), and Atlanta (early September).

The overarching goal of the MSM phase of the *Act Against AIDS* campaign is to increase HIV testing and

make it a routine behavior among young African American MSM. To help accomplish this goal, PCB convened an external work group of 15 African American MSM experts from a cross-section of academic institutions, community-based organizations, public health institutions, and national associations to provide ongoing technical input for developing effective messages and materials directed to black MSM.

National Organization of Black County Officials Launches AAALI Sessions at Legislative Conference and 25th Economic Development Conference

In March, the National Organization of Black County Officials (NOBCO) held its first *Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative* (AAALI) session at the National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. PCB's National Prevention Partnerships team in DHAP gave presentations on the initiative and the impact of HIV/AIDS on the black community at a NOBCO board meeting and at the NOBCO legislative session. Attendees included numerous elected and appointed officials, visiting students, and NACo conference participants. Lisa Fager Bediako of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF), another AAALI organization, also attended the legislative session.

In addition, NOBCO invited all AAALI organizations to attend its 25th Annual Economic Development Conference in Miami from April 30 to May 3. The PCB Partnerships team presented two HIV/AIDS-related sessions, and DHAP provided a variety of HIV/AIDS materials. Other featured speakers at the conference included Alonzo Mourning, former National Basketball Association player and current CDC partner; Michael Blake, deputy associate director, White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs; and Joe Leonard, Jr., PhD, assistant secretary for civil rights, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

National Action Network Launches Healthy Tuesday and Unveils AAALI to Constituents

In April, the National Action Network (NAN) held its 11th Annual National Convention in New York. The event featured a panel titled *Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative*, hosted by NAN's National Director of Health and Wellness, Tony R. Wafford. Panelists discussed the impact of HIV/AIDS on the African American community and presented information on AAALI, which is part of the national *Act Against AIDS* communication campaign. Panelists for the session included Deborah Fraser-Howze, OraSure Technology; C. Virginia Fields, National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS; Eli Dancy, STFree; M. Monica Sweeney, MD, assistant clinical professor of Preventive Medicine, SUNY Health Science Center of Brooklyn, and vice-president of Medical Affairs at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Family Health Center, Inc.; Craig Brandman, MD, of Medilinq, Inc.; and Robert Bailey of CDC.

In addition, NAN recently launched a 1-hour radio segment called "Healthy Tuesday." The segment airs during NAN president Rev. Al Sharpton's 4-hour radio program, *Keeping It Real with Al Sharpton*, and discusses HIV/AIDS in the black community. Rev. Sharpton's show has an audience of approximately 800,000 listeners in more than 47 markets.

Earlier this year, NAN collaborated with HNR partner, The Links, Inc., to host the "Courageous Conversations Tea Party" at a Los Angeles chapter meeting. The National Council of Negro Women, Inc., an AAALI partner, was also represented at the event.

REACH Media and Tom Joyner Urge Listeners to Take Loved Ones to the Doctor

In April, CDC continued its 3-year partnership with REACH Media and the *Tom Joyner Morning Show* in support of the company's popular *Take a Loved One to the Doctor Day* (TLODD) initiative. The initiative seeks to bring free health education, awareness, and screenings to the African American community.

In support of the event, CDC coordinated linkages between REACH Media and existing relationships with health departments and community-based organizations in several cities, including Atlanta, Washington, D.C., Miami, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Dallas. To boost education and awareness, CDC negotiated placement of HIV/AIDS information on BlackAmericaWeb.com and collaborated with Tom Joyner to pen an op-ed on HIV/AIDS that was also featured on the online portal. On April 7, Dr. Kevin Fenton, director of NCHHSTP, and Dr. Ian Smith, leader of the 50 Million Pound Challenge, appeared as guests on the *Tom Joyner Morning Show*.



According to REACH Media, the 2009 TLODD event was the most successful in the initiative's 8-year history: more than 6,000 listeners attended live broadcast events, and more than 300 listeners opted for on-site HIV testing. The campaign also received additional media coverage from Essence.com, CNN.com, *Black Health Magazine* (cover story), and numerous affiliate radio stations and local newspapers. Through updated articles on BlackAmericaWeb.com, the initiative will receive ongoing support until the end of September.

SCLC Announces Silence Is Sinful in Association with Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative (AAALI)



On April 19, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) announced its AAALI program, “Silence Is Sinful” (SIS), in Kansas City. Through the SIS program, SCLC aims to increase the number of people who know their HIV infection status and reduce the number of new HIV infections in the African American community. SCLC began the meeting with a press conference to announce the SIS initiative to the media.

During the meeting, Bernice Frazier, executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Foundation, gave a presentation on AAALI and awarded mini-grants to six chapters to fund the distribution of training information and to increase awareness that will help dispel HIV/AIDS-related myths in the African American community. Mini-grants were awarded to the following chapters: Pensacola, FL; Cobb County, GA; Savannah Coastal, GA; Dayton, OH; Dallas, TX; and West Jefferson, AL.

At the meeting, 30 people received training on the SIS initiative and HIV/AIDS materials. Local AIDS service organizations were updated on the initiative and agreed to partner with SCLC to provide HIV testing, counseling services, education, and culturally relevant materials at upcoming events.

National Medical Association Uses Times Square Jumbotron to Launch 9½ Minutes Advertisement

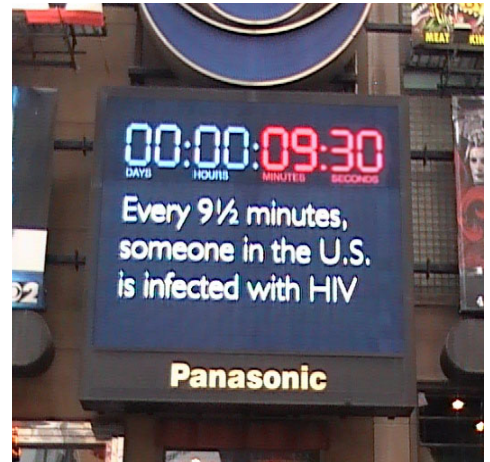
On May 5, the National Medical Association (NMA) launched a 9½ Minutes ad on a 26- by 20-foot jumbotron screen located between 7th and 8th avenues in the heart of Times Square Plaza. The advertisement proclaims that “Every 9½ minutes someone in the United States is infected with HIV,” highlights the *Act Against AIDS* logo, and directs viewers to www.nineandahalfminutes.org. From May 5 through June 30, the ad was displayed every 20 minutes, 24 hours a day.

CDC Launches Act Against AIDS Media Roundtables

As part of the *Act Against AIDS* campaign, CDC has launched a series of local media roundtable discussions for black journalists in 10 cities across the United States.

Although most African Americans identify the media as their primary source of information about HIV/AIDS, recent reports from the Kaiser Family Foundation, an *Act Against AIDS* partner, demonstrate a growing complacency about the epidemic. The percentage of African Americans identifying HIV/AIDS as the nation’s most urgent health problem declined from 43% in 2004 to 22% in 2009. Additional survey results also point to a precipitous decline—from 62% in 2004 to 33% in 2009—in the percentage of African Americans who say that they have “seen, heard, or read a lot about the problem of AIDS in the U.S. in the past year.”

In June, CDC kicked off the first of a series of local media roundtable discussions in Washington, D.C., as part of the *Act Against AIDS* campaign. The roundtables bring together the city’s top journalists, media specialists, community leaders, and CDC experts to discuss the HIV/AIDS crisis in the African American community and explore how to effectively educate the public on the severity of the epidemic.



NMA-provided Jumbotron went live in Times Square in May.